

Kathleen Sebelius

Secretary Health and Human Services
US Department of Health and Human Services



Kathleen Sebelius was sworn in as the 21st Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on April 28, 2009.

As Secretary, she leads the principal agency charged with keeping Americans healthy, ensuring they get the health care they need, and providing children, families, and seniors with the essential human services they depend on. She also oversees one of the largest civilian departments in the federal government, with nearly 80,000 employees.

Since taking office, Secretary Sebelius has been a leader on some of the Obama administration's top priorities. As the country's highest-ranking health official, she has been a powerful voice for reforming our health insurance system. She has also been charged by the President with coordinating the response to the 2009 H1N1 flu virus. And under her leadership, HHS has provided a wide range of services from health care to child care to energy assistance to help families weather the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

Secretary Sebelius has answered President Obama's call to form partnerships across government to improve the lives of Americans. She is the Co-Chair, with Secretary Vilsack, of the President's Food Safety Working Group. With Attorney General Holder, she chairs the new Health Care Fraud Prevention and Action Team (HEAT). She has teamed up with Secretary Duncan improve early childhood education. And as part of President Obama's "Year of Community Living," she is working with Housing and Urban Development Secretary Donovan to improve the lives of seniors and people with disabilities who wish to live at home.

Secretary Sebelius has been a leader on health care, family, and senior issues for over 20 years. As Governor of Kansas from 2003 to 2009, she fought to create jobs, improve access to affordable health care, and give every Kansas child a quality education. In 2005, Time Magazine recognized her achievements by naming her one of America's Top Five Governors.

Before being elected Governor, she served from 1995 to 2003 as the first Democrat to be elected Kansas Insurance Commissioner. In that role, she was recognized as a strong advocate for consumers while streamlining the Department's budget. For her efforts, Governing Magazine selected her as their Public Official of the Year for 2000. Prior to her service as Insurance Commissioner, she was a member of the Kansas House of Representatives from 1987 to 1995.

Secretary Sebelius is the first daughter of a governor to be elected governor in American history. She holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Kansas and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trinity Washington University. She is married to Gary Sebelius, a federal magistrate judge. They have two sons, Ned and John.